

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. – 22. (Cancelled)

23. (New) A method of detecting human low-molecular-weight CD14 without detecting human high-molecular-weight CD14 which comprises binding said human low-molecular weight CD14 with a sandwich immunoassay kit comprising:

(a) an antibody that binds to a peptide consisting of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID No:2; and

(b) an antibody that binds to a peptide consisting of the amino acid sequence from the position of 17th to the position of 26th of SEQ ID NO:5;

wherein said human low-molecular weight CD14 has the characteristic features as follows:

- (1) no binding to F1025-3-1 (Accession No. FERM BP-7296) antibody,
- (2) showing a peak elution in a molecular weight range of 25 to 45 kDa on a gel filtration chromatography, and
- (3) being obtainable from human plasma.

24. (New) A method of detecting human low-molecular-weight CD14 without detecting human high-molecular weight CD14 which comprises binding said human low-molecular weight CD14 with a sandwich immunoassay kit comprising:

(a) an antibody that binds to a peptide consisting of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2; and

(b) an antibody that competes with an antibody which binds to a peptide consisting of the amino acid sequence from the position of 17th to the position of 26th of SEQ ID NO:5;

wherein said human low-molecular weight CD14 has the characteristic features as follows:

- (1) no binding to F1025-3-1 (Accession No. FERM BP-7296) antibody,

- (2) showing a peak of elution in a molecular weight range of 25 to 45 kDa on a gel filtration chromatography, and
- (3) being obtainable from human plasma.

25. (New) A method for diagnosing sepsis in a patient comprising the steps of:
measuring an amount of a human low-molecular weight CD14 in blood of the patient by a sandwich immunoassay kit comprising:

- (a) an antibody that binds to a peptide consisting of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2; and
- (b) an antibody that binds to a peptide consisting of the amino acid sequence from the position of 17th to the position of 26th of SEQ ID NO:5;

wherein said human low-molecular weight CD14 has the characteristic features as follows:

- (1) no binding to F1025-3-1 (Accession No. FERM BP-7296) antibody;
 - (2) showing a peak of elution in a molecular weight range of 25 to 45 kDa on a gel filtration chromatography, and
 - (3) being obtainable from human plasma;
- comparing the measured amount to a standard amount of a normal individual; and evaluating whether the measured amount is higher than the standard amount of a normal individual.

26. (New) A method for diagnosing sepsis in a patient comprising the steps of:
measuring an amount of a human low-molecular weight CD14 in blood of the patient by a sandwich immunoassay kit comprising:

- (a) an antibody that binds to a peptide consisting of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2; and
- (b) an antibody that competes with an antibody which binds to a peptide consisting of the amino acid sequence from the position of 17th to the position of 26th of SEQ ID NO:5;

wherein said human low-molecular weight CD14 has the characteristic features as follows:

- (1) no binding to F1025-3-1 (Accession No. FERM BP-7296) antibody,
- (2) showing a peak of elution in a molecular weight range of 25 to 45 kDa on a gel filtration chromatography, and
- (3) being obtainable from human plasma;
comparing the measured amount to a standard amount of a normal individual; and
evaluating whether the measured amount is higher than the standard amount of a normal individual.